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SUBJECT Cubans in Africa

JOHN CHANCELLOR: On Capitol Hill today, much talk about Cubans in Africa, as the Administration discussed its evidence that Cuban troops in Angola had responsibility, at least in part, for the invasion of neighboring Zaire. The Administration says it has evidence to back that assertion up, although there was some confusion about the nature of the evidence.

Chris Wallace reports.

CHRIS WALLACE: O'Neill said the President and CIA Director Stansfield Turner revealed at last week's White House meeting they had hard evidence that Cubans accompanied Katangan rebels on their raid. They have some pictures of Cuban troop leaders with the rebels in Zaire, O'Neill said today. The Speaker acknowledged he had not seen the pictures themselves.

The problem is, other congressional leaders remember the meeting differently. House Minority Leader John Rhodes said that any reference to Cubans in Zaire was very iffy. Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd said, "I don't recall that being mentioned."

This afternoon, CIA Director Turner briefed members of the House Intelligence Committee about the raid. Afterwards, he denied ever telling anyone Cuban soldiers went into Zaire.

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: We are not saying they did not go. We are not taking a position that they did. In short, the evidence is not that hard in one direction or the other.

WALLACE: The question now is whether Speaker O'Neill heard something no one else did, or whether he just made a mistake.

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Late today, CIA Director Turner met with the Speaker; and afterwards, O'Neill's office said, "The Speaker stands by his statement."